



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
FAMILY INDEPENDENCE AGENCY  
LANSING



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

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Dave Clark, Editor  
Adrian Daily Telegram  
133 N. Winter Street  
Adrian, MI 49221

To the Editor:

In recent weeks the Adrian Daily Telegram has written extensively about the future of the Adrian Training School. Your June 19 article, "ATS advocates say cabinet secretary has 'conflict of interest,' " prompted me to respond to the continuing coverage of this issue.

As director of the Family Independence Agency (FIA), I am interested in every aspect of our juvenile justice program including the future of the Adrian Training School. The FIA is responsible for the care and supervision of delinquent youths placed by courts with the state and as department director it is my responsibility to assure that the best interests of the children are served in all decisions regarding their care.

The FIA has a very serious team of professionals committed to the youth we serve and that includes Felix Sharpe, Director of Residential Treatment Facilities. Reporting by the Telegram that took comments made by Mr. Sharpe out of context was inappropriate and a disservice to Mr. Sharpe as well as the department's commitment to the Adrian Training School and its residents. It should be noted that Adrian Mayor Rye has also publicly stated that the Telegram's June 19 report took Mr. Sharpe's comments completely out of context.

In that same article, the Telegram questioned the integrity of Lisa Webb Sharpe, who serves as the Governor's cabinet secretary. For the record, Mrs. Webb Sharpe's responsibilities require interaction with each state department, preparing analyses and recommendations to the Governor on many issues. There is absolutely no conflict in the administration of her duties regarding the Adrian Training School.

In the days to come we will be unveiling our long-term plan for the Adrian Training School. The Telegram and its readers can be assured everyone involved in developing the plan have acted in the best interests of the children and with the highest level of integrity and compassion. To suggest otherwise is simply wrong.

Sincerely,

Marianne Udow